

Letter from the Co-Directors

In September 2009, Chancellor Marty Meehan and Provost Ahmed Abdelal established the Center for Irish Partnerships at UMass Lowell, one of six international partnership centers. The aim of these centers is to strengthen and coordinate ongoing international partnerships as well as to develop new education and research partnerships in areas of the world that pose strategically important opportunities.

Lowell is a vibrant city that has always been home to waves of immigrants, the first of whom were the Irish. The Irish played a fundamental role in the development of the new town and it is a role that they continue to play to this day.

The Center for Irish Partnership fosters collaborations and partnerships with educational institutions in Ireland and Northern Ireland across an interdisciplinary spectrum including the social sciences, the natural sciences and engineering, the humanities and health and education fields.

These international partnerships embrace faculty exchange and joint research ventures and to work with Irish partners to create a dynamic model for Cross-Atlantic collaboration that will promote and advance University of Massachusetts Lowell's pillar of excellence on Global Engagement & Inclusive Culture, enhancing the student experience by providing a global perspective to teaching and research, while contributing to Irish interests through exchange and service.

Since it was founded, the Center for Irish Partnerships has forged special transatlantic relationships with Irish educational partners on both sides of the border. The success of the Center is due to the strength of these relationships, the support of our advisory board and the university and Lowell communities as well as to the generous support of our donors. Thank you!

Dr. Frank Talty, Dr. Stephen McCarthy, Professor Ann Marie Hurley and Victoria Denoon.
(Co-Directors)

Center for Irish Partnerships Strategic Priorities

1. Institutional partnerships

Our 2020 Strategic Plan calls for a University that envisions a rich array of international partnerships for UMass Lowell that will help our students become globally competent and bring more international students to campus. These partnerships will offer our students meaningful and substantive international learning experiences, including traditional study abroad and experiential learning.

Our international collaborations enhance the quality of education that we provide to our students. An understanding of other countries and cultures enriches our students' education overall and helps make them global citizens. In today's ever shrinking world, a global perspective gives our graduates a workplace advantage by ensuring that they have the multicultural understanding required to succeed.

UMass Lowell's international partners enhance the breadth and depth of faculty research activities, represent student travel interests, and reflect the multi-cultural heritage of the Lowell community. By nurturing research relationships around the world, we increase the chances that we will innovate more efficiently and more effectively and in ways we could not have imagined otherwise.

Our global partners also reflect the University's economic development efforts. By serving as a catalyst that connects companies and business leaders in our region to those around the world, we become an effective economic engine for our own community. We can help to strengthen industries in our region by helping them become global.

Perhaps most important of all, we feel that international collaboration contributes to world harmony. Institutions of higher education are not only readily able to foster better international communication and understanding through collaboration, but we believe it is also an important responsibility that institutions of higher education bear.

The Center for Irish Partnerships has established formal collaborations with the following institutions in Ireland:

- Queen's University Belfast (2009)
- Dublin City University (2010)
- Ulster University (2011)
- National University of Ireland, Galway (2014)
- University of Limerick (2015)
- University College Cork (2015)
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology (what do we want to say about this?)

2. Research and Collaboration

US/Ireland Emerging Technologies Conferences

The U.S./Ireland Emerging Technologies Conference

On October 19 and 20, 2009, the University of Massachusetts Lowell hosted the first U.S./Ireland Emerging Technologies Conference. It was held at the University of Massachusetts Inn and Conference Center. This exciting joint conference was host to Professors from Queens University in Belfast, North Ireland; Dublin City University Ireland and the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Second U.S. / Ireland Emerging Technologies Conference 2011 – “The University and Economic Recovery: The Role of Technology, Enterprise and Learning Approaches”

The conference on “The University and Economic Recovery: The Role of Technology, Enterprise and Learning Approaches” took place on October 25-26th in the Helix at Dublin City University. The conference focused on highlighting ways whereby Universities in conjunction with industry, funding bodies and through collaborations, can aid economic recovery. The conference invited speakers from Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Engineers Ireland, the HEA, IBEC, and the President of DCU, Prof. Brian MacCraith.

There was also a conjoint meeting between DCU, the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Queen's University and which was designed to enhance collaboration and research between all three institutions. The conference addressed ways whereby the Universities can address economic recovery by exploiting their expertise in collaborative activities

FOCUSING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY. In the latter case the focus is on nanotechnology, diagnostics, medical devices and the associated technologies. All these areas are high priorities for the three Universities and further joint initiatives and activities will be developed based on these and associated areas.

The 3rd U S/Ireland Emerging Technologies Conference

The conference on Advanced Polymers and Teaching and Learning took place September 24 - 26th at Queen's University Belfast. Chancellor Meehan provided remarks at conference opening and Gala Dinner. Dr. Frank Talty gave a lecture on the U.S. Election at Queen's and interviews on BBC Radio Ulster and UTV. Faculty from UMass Lowell presenting at the conference included – Dr. Stephen McCarthy, Dr. Steve Tello, Dr. Susan Brauhut, Dr. Carol Barry and Dr. Joey Mead.

Irish in Massachusetts Conference

The Irish in Massachusetts: Historical Significance, Lasting Legacy was held on Wednesday, Sept. 24 to Friday, Sept. 26, 2014 at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center, 50 Warren St., Lowell, MA 01852.

This conference, presented in partnership by UMass Lowell and Queen's University Belfast, was an interdisciplinary look at the understudied nature of the Irish Diaspora in New England, with specific focus on the Irish and their contributions to Massachusetts.

With 24 percent of the Massachusetts population being identified as being of Irish ancestry in the 2000 and 2010 censuses, there is significant interest in the state. Despite the demographics, there is no detailed historical study of the Irish experience in Massachusetts, such as that achieved for other centers of Irish settlement in the United States.

Irish-American Heritage Archaeological Program

The Irish-American Heritage Archaeological Program was established following the signing of an international partnership agreement between UMass Lowell and Queen's University Belfast in March 2009. The objective is to enable students to gain a deeper understanding of the life of the Irish in Ireland before and after the Great Famine, and the role played by the Irish in the development of America during the 19th century.

In 1822 a group of 30 Irish labourers led by Hugh Cummiskey arrived in the new industrial town of Lowell to assist with the excavation of the Pawtucket and Merrimack canals. By 1831 their numbers had swelled to over 400 and Kirk Boott, mill manager, had donated a plot of company land for a Catholic church – St. Patrick's Church. This event marked the permanent settlement of the Irish in the town, with the area around the church becoming known as the "Irish Acre," the "Paddy Camps" or "New Dublin".

The old church was constructed in what had been a shanty town, but the area was landscaped and changed when the old timber church was replaced in 1854 with a neo-Gothic stone church. From cartographic and pictorial evidence it would seem, however, that the area to the front of the church has remained unchanged since that time and remains in lawn. As such, it was decided that an archaeological excavation would be undertaken on the front lawn at St. Patrick's Church to see what – if anything – might survive

3. Faculty Connections

The Center for Irish Partnerships provides stipends that faculty who are engaged in research with colleagues at one of our partner institutions in Ireland or Northern Ireland can apply for.

Several faculty members have been asked to give lectures at various institutions in Ireland including, National University of Ireland at Galway, Queen's University, Dublin City University and St. Patrick's Drumcondra.

We have hosted faculty from Queen's University, Dublin City University and Cork Institute of Technology on campus for lectures and workshops.

Provide testimonials from Jim Nehring, Paula Rayman, Karen Melillo, Jonathan Silverman, Steve McCarthy

4. Student Experiences

Student Testimonials

"This was an experience out of this world...or at least out of the country. Having the opportunity to experience archaeology with amazing and highly entertaining professionals, and learning what really lies in the ground beneath our feet really opened my eyes up to looking at the world in a different way. Seeing how the dig connected a story from Lowell to Northern Ireland showed me how amazing the discovery of history is, and how the smallest item is significant. As an engineering student, this was an adventure outside of my daily routine, and it was an experience full of wonderful people, learning, and traveling that I would not trade for anything else."

-Marcelle Durrenberger, Irish-American Heritage Archaeological Program participant 2012

"This is one of the best experiences of my college career, participating in the Irish-American Archeological gave me real-world experience along with seeing history at my fingertips"

-Katherine Henckler, Irish-American Heritage Archaeological Program participant 2012

It was an absolutely amazing experience. It was two weeks I know I'll never forget and I would love to have the chance to do it all over again. Not only because the archaeological dig was so fascinating to me, but the people that we interacted with along the way were some of the nicest people I've ever met, and even though we were only with them for a total of 2 weeks during this experience, they've made a big impact on me nonetheless. The memories I've made with professionals in the field and the things I've learned while digging in the dirt are things that will stick with me forever.

-Ami Krawczyk, Irish-American Heritage Archaeological Program participant 2012

"I signed up for the International Summer School at Queen's because coming from Irish decent I never really knew or understood all the troubles that took place over there, and wanted a clearer understanding of it all. When asked what my favorite memory was, I would have to say that every single second I spent there was my favorite memory. I had the best experience of my life with what started out as complete strangers but some to this day are some of my best friends and they are from California, Texas, Oregon, etc., and I still talk to and see them whenever I can. We all meet up in New York City twice since we have been back in America. Also the Irish are the nicest and kindest people on this planet, they made me feel at home there in every way, and they went out of their way to please everyone in the group. In short, it was the greatest experience of my life."

- Mark Bresnihan, '11, Criminal Justice, Lexington, Mass.

"I enrolled in a class called, "Problems of Modern Ireland" with Dr. Lipchitz, and I loved it! After that, I wanted to learn more about the history of Ireland and Northern Ireland and this program seemed like the best way to do that. The faculty at the Irish Studies Institute were excellent. The seminars were fantastic, the field trips outstanding! I loved everything about it: the accommodations, the city, the activities, meeting new

*friends, etc. It was an unforgettable academic experience! I highly recommend it! I'm so glad I was able to take part in the university's first group going!" *

- Maria Millett, '10, History major and Latin American Studies minor, Bradford, Mass.

5. Community engagement

An integral part of the Center for Irish Partnerships is to plan a wide range of activities to shed light on the major issues in Ireland. The Center will work to advance knowledge of the relationship between economic development and research efforts. The Center will host guest speaker series, seminars, joint conferences and cultural events as well as dissemination of relevant research reports, media resources and special lectures.

6. Relationships with Government and Business Leaders

Business Leaders and Local Government Collaboration

In November 2010, The Center for Irish Partnerships hosted a visit to UMass Lowell by delegation from Donegal, Ireland, including Mayor Cora Harvey and members of the County Council.

In October 2011, The Center for Irish Partnerships hosted The Northern Ireland Massachusetts Connection (NIMAC), a group dedicated to advancing business, research and clinical collaboration, between Massachusetts, Northern Ireland and Europe, on campus in the M2D2 facility.

In November 2011, The Center for Irish Partnerships hosted Breakfast Roundtable for a delegation of local authority and business leaders from the Northwest of Ireland on the Green Economy and Tourism.

Meetings and Events with Irish Government Leaders

On November 19, 2010, Ireland's Ambassador to the United States of America, His Excellency Michael Collins visited UMass Lowell with Irish Consul General to Boston, Michael Lonergan, to hear about the various partnership activities UMass Lowell is engaged in with Irish Universities.

In February 2012, the Center for Irish Partnerships directors attended a reception at the Seaport Hotel for Taoiseach Enda Kenny, T.D.

In March 2012, Ireland's Minister for Children and Youth Affairs visited UMass Lowell for a roundtable discussion on Children's Rights with faculty members Linda Williams and Andy Harris from Criminal Justice and Stephanie Block from Psychology.

In May 2012, Co-Director Frank Talty attended a luncheon at the UMass Club welcoming Irish President, Michael D. Higgins, to Boston. Co-Directors Steve McCarthy and Victoria Denoon subsequently attended a lecture at Faneuil Hall by President Michael D. Higgins, regarding the Famine.

Become Involved

The Center for Irish Partnerships at UMass Lowell would like to thank the following individuals for their support:

CIP Advisory Board

Donors

Get added to the Center for Irish Partnerships at UMass Lowell mailing list

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Contact Info